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Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Audit of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General*

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit, for the attention of the General Assembly, the attached report on the audit of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), conveyed to him by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services.

2. The Secretary-General takes note of its findings and concurs with its recommendations.

* The present report was not initially anticipated for issuance during the resumed fifty-sixth session. It was delayed owing to extensive consultations with the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the audit of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Summary

The sustainability of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) has been the focus of several audits, evaluations and internal reports to the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs over the last decade.

In an audit conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in 1998, it was observed that the inordinate delay in deciding on a proposed merger of INSTRAW and the United Nations Development Fund for Women since 1993 had adversely affected the Institute's funding and performance and that there was a lack of effective inter-agency coordination on issues related to women. It was recommended in the audit that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs advocate that a decision on institutional arrangements be taken without further delay to address governance problems. Subsequently, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs outlined three options to the Steering Committee on Reform and Management: (a) status quo; (b) merger with the Department; or (c) merger with the United Nations University. In the end, no final decision was taken by the Steering Committee.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 56/125 of 19 December 2001, decided to establish a working group composed of representatives of Member States to make recommendations to the General Assembly, for its consideration by the end of 2002, on the future operation of the Institute; and to examine ways in which the Institute could be provided with resources to enable it to continue its operation until the Assembly has considered the recommendations of the working group.

In its 2001 audit, covering the period from 1998 to August 2001, OIOS found that the difficulties experienced by INSTRAW noted in the 1998 audit report had been further aggravated and were contributing to the Institute's slow demise. The main findings of the audit are discussed below.

The rationale for making INSTRAW autonomous was not clearly enunciated in its statute. Assuming that autonomy was considered essential to exercising independence in research, raising and utilizing funds and recruiting staff, the Institute generally has not achieved these objectives.

The INSTRAW Board of Trustees had not assisted the Institute's fund-raising activities and did not fulfil its management oversight and advisory functions. The Board apparently served simply as a formal conduit for reporting to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

The goal of financing INSTRAW entirely through voluntary funding has not been achieved, resulting in financial instability. Some important donors and stakeholders interviewed by OIOS expressed concern that INSTRAW had not developed its own "niche" in the research and training areas. During 1990-2001, contributions received by INSTRAW declined by 86 per cent, leading to a substantial decline in expenditures and staffing. In December 2000, the General Assembly approved a non-recurring subvention of $800,000 to enable INSTRAW to continue its activities during 2001. However the

subvention was not utilized and the General Assembly, at its fifty-sixth session in December 2001, decided to request the Secretary-General to disburse the provision of $650,000 for the continuance of INSTRAW in 2002.

The Gender Awareness and Information Networking System (GAINS), conceptualized as an integrated knowledge and information management system, was to be financed as a project separately from the Institute's core funding. However, due to the lack of resources, GAINS has been funded from the INSTRAW budget, resulting in the deferral of other INSTRAW activities. In the opinion of OIOS, activities implemented under the System were not primary to the INSTRAW mandate. The direction and cost-effectiveness of GAINS need to be evaluated.

INSTRAW had no Director from February to August 1999 and from August 2001 to March 2002. During these periods, Professional staff members at the P-3 or P-2 levels served as the Officer-in-Charge. OIOS also identified a number of problems regarding the management and performance of INSTRAW consultants.

The roles and responsibilities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs had not been clarified with regard to providing direction to the INSTRAW Board and staff or in liaising with the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Also, the responsibilities of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General with regard to INSTRAW have not been clearly defined. Furthermore, in light of the issues discussed in its report, OIOS questions whether the Institute is capable of being viable and self-sustaining in the long term.

OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General:

- Detail the role and responsibilities of his Special Representative for INSTRAW, with a clear delegation of authority;
- Instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it consider the option of closing INSTRAW as an alternative to sustaining it, taking into account the findings discussed in the current OIOS report.

In the event that the Working Group decides not to consider this option, OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General:

- Instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it examine (a) the feasibility of the Institute's continuation as an autonomous body within the framework of the United Nations and (b) the strategy for achieving effective autonomy for INSTRAW through the appropriate delegation of authority;
- Instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it consider improvements to the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, such as the possible reconstitution of the Board to include donor representation or, alternatively, replacing the Board by a consultative committee, thereby ensuring that the Institute's primary oversight and fund-raising functions are effectively carried out;
- Propose to the General Assembly that it consider the need to continue the temporary funding of the Institute's core operations from the United Nations regular budget until the Working Group has completed its in-depth assessment of INSTRAW and made its final recommendations concerning its sustainability, should the Working Group study not be completed before the end of the General Assembly's fifty-sixth session.

OIOS also recommends that the interim Director of INSTRAW:

- **Ensure that the Gender Awareness and Information Networking System project is evaluated and refocused before proceeding with further implementation;**
- **Consider specific donor interests and intergovernmental mandates as primary criteria in developing a more focused plan of action;**
- **Formulate a business plan for its programme of work.**

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I. Introduction

1. The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) was conceived in 1975 at the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in Mexico, as an Institute to conduct research and training dedicated to the advancement of women. In 1976, the Economic and Social Council established INSTRAW as an autonomous Institute and one of three entities in the United Nations system dedicated to the advancement of women worldwide. The other two entities were the Division for Advancement of Women within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) within the United Nations Development Programme. In 1983, INSTRAW was headquartered in the Dominican Republic, in premises donated by the host country.

2. In 2001, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted a comprehensive audit of INSTRAW, covering the period from 1998 onwards. The general objectives of the audit were to assess: the role, effectiveness and relevance of INSTRAW in the advancement of women; the recent changes in its working methods; the reliability and integrity of financial information; compliance with relevant rules, regulations and procedures governing administrative and financial operations and programme management; and the safeguarding of the Institute's assets and the use of its resources. The audit was conducted in Santo Domingo and New York.

3. A draft of the report was made available to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (who serves as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for INSTRAW). Their comments, which incorporated those of INSTRAW officials and those made separately by the Controller, have been taken into account and are shown in italics.

II. Autonomy and governance

A. No decision on earlier reform proposals

4. Over the last decade, the sustainability of INSTRAW has been the focus of several audits, evaluations and internal reports to the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Efforts to reform INSTRAW management and governance date from June 1993, when the Secretary-General submitted a proposal to the Council calling for the merger of INSTRAW and UNIFEM. In December 1993, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to carry out an institutional, organizational and financial study before further contemplation of the merger. In September 1994, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions concluded that the Secretary-General's report, which had been prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, did not address the long- and short-term effects of the merger on INSTRAW and UNIFEM programme delivery. The Advisory Committee also concluded that the interaction between INSTRAW and other entities concerned with women's issues needed to be rationalized before approving the merger.

5. The Advisory Committee recommended that these institutional arrangements be discussed at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing. However, the 1995 Beijing Conference did not discuss the merger, but only outlined the distinct mandates of the various entities, which were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/203 of 22 December 1995.

6. An OIOS audit conducted in 1998 observed that the inordinate delay in deciding on the proposed merger of INSTRAW and UNIFEM since 1993 had adversely affected the Institute's funding, staffing, programme planning and performance and that there was a lack of effective inter-agency coordination on issues related to women. OIOS recommended that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs advocate that a decision be taken on the merger proposal without further delay.

7. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs submitted a note for the discussion of INSTRAW reform to the Steering Committee on Reform and Management in December 1998. The paper circulated for consideration by the Steering Committee contained four options, as follows: (a) maintaining the status quo with some modifications; (b) merging management functions with UNIFEM and moving to New York; (c) merging some functions with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs with a gradual move to New York; or (d) merging with the

United Nations University, which is located in Tokyo, without shifting the location of INSTRAW from Santo Domingo. In February 1999, a revised note was moved for discussion, which outlined three options: (a) status quo; (b) merger with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; or (c) merger with the United Nations University.

8. Under the merger options, net funding per annum for INSTRAW was estimated at approximately $1.6-1.8 million for research and training activities in 1998-1999. The note acknowledged that, should the status quo continue without intervention, the Institute would not have the resources to pay staff or maintain programmes beyond August 1999. As highlighted throughout the present report, the lack of progress on the reform proposal has exacerbated the difficulties experienced by INSTRAW, leading the Institute to a slow decline.

9. The General Assembly, in its resolution 56/125 of 19 December 2001, decided to establish a Working Group composed of representatives of Member States to make recommendations to the Assembly before the end of the fifty-sixth session, for its consideration by the end of 2002, on the future operation of the Institute. The Working Group would examine ways, within the framework of Assembly resolution 55/219 of 23 December 2000 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/40 of 28 July 2001, in which the Institute could be provided with resources to enable it to continue its operation until the Assembly had considered the recommendations of the Working Group.

B. Problems related to the autonomy of INSTRAW

10. The statute of INSTRAW created it as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations. However, the basis for establishing INSTRAW as an autonomous entity was not fully enunciated in its statute and the strategy for achieving this goal was not clarified in a subsequent delegation of authority to the Institute.

11. Assuming that autonomy was considered essential for the Institute to exercise independence in research and training, raising and utilizing its funds and recruiting staff, in practice, it has not achieved most of these objectives. For example, for the period under review, core staff could only be recruited with the approval of the Office of Human Resource Management and separate project staff were not recruited. Also, fund-raising had not been achieved successfully.

12. Autonomy has also been disadvantageous in that INSTRAW had to report to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly through its Board of Trustees. This forced the small core staff to spend a great deal of time in preparing and processing reports for the Board, leaving little time for actual research and training activities. As a result, the quantity and quality of the Institute's substantive output were limited.

C. Limited value added by the Board of Trustees

13. Pursuant to its statute, INSTRAW is to be governed by a Board of Trustees composed of 11 members nominated by the Economic and Social Council for a term of three years according to the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Trustees, who must possess appropriate qualifications and expertise, can be reappointed for an additional term. Ex officio members of the Board include a representative of the Secretary-General (the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women), the INSTRAW Director and representatives of each regional commission and the host country. The Board elects its own President and formulates principles, policies and guidelines for the Institute, approves the work programme and budget proposals, makes recommendations on the operations of the Institute to the Economic and Social Council and reports periodically to the Council and the General Assembly.

14. As per the statute, the Board is also involved in fund-raising activities as it considers methods of enhancing the Institute's financial resources with a view to ensuring its effectiveness and continuity within its autonomous character and the framework of the United Nations. The Secretary-General appoints the Director of INSTRAW, who oversees the Institute's day-to-day activities after consulting with the Board.

15. OIOS found that the Institute's Board of Trustees, contrary to its mandate, had not effectively assisted INSTRAW in its fund-raising activities. Similarly, the Board did not fulfil its management oversight and advisory functions as it only met once per year. OIOS noted that Board members were sometimes difficult to locate. The Board apparently served simply as a formal

conduit for reporting to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. OIOS believes that the Board's shortcomings, inter alia, resulted from the fact that its membership, based on equitable geographical distribution, was not sufficiently representative of member States and private donor interests. These circumstances warrant a reassessment of the Board's working methods and its composition.

III. Financial sustainability of INSTRAW

Sharp decline in donor contributions between 1990-2001

16. According to the statute of INSTRAW, the Institute was to be funded entirely by voluntary contributions from member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, foundations and private and other sources. However, in the period from 1990 to 2001, contributions received had declined by 86 per cent, resulting in a substantial decline in budget expenditures, especially staffing (see annex I).

17. In accordance with the Institute's estimates, its 2001 requirements amounted to at least $1.4 million to fund its activities at the minimum level. In view of the Institute's funding deficit, the General Assembly, by its decision 55/457 of 23 December 2000, decided to advance to INSTRAW up to $800,000 on a one-time and emergency basis for the year 2001, pending receipt of voluntary contributions. However, no structural solutions or alternatives were proposed at that time to permit the Assembly to decide on the modalities needed to allow INSTRAW to operate beyond 2001. Based on the Institute's recurring financial difficulties during 2001, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General in December 2001 to disburse $650,000 of the original $800,000 advance, which had not been spent in 2001, as a subvention to be credited to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Institute to ensure the continuation of its operations in 2002.

18. The goal of financing INSTRAW through total voluntary funding has not been achieved, resulting in financial instability. By comparison, OIOS noted that the statute of another United Nations research institution, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, stated, inter alia, that while voluntary contributions from member States, public and private organizations shall form the principal source of financing of the Institute, a subvention towards meeting the cost of the Director and staff may be provided by the United Nations regular budget so long as it does not exceed an amount equivalent to one half of the assured income from voluntary sources.

19. *The Department of Economic and Social Affairs concurred with OIOS that the issue of fund-raising is critical to the survival of INSTRAW. With the assistance of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, INSTRAW has repeatedly approached private and other organizations, but regrettably without success, as the Institute has very few marketable products.*

20. The research activities of INSTRAW are by nature envisaged to be long term and thus require long-term financial support in order to be productive and to attract donor contributions. Therefore, in the opinion of OIOS, in the absence of adequate and sustained voluntary funding, there is a need to continue the temporary funding of the Institute's core operations from the United Nations regular budget until the Working Group has completed its in-depth assessment of INSTRAW and formulated its final recommendations concerning its sustainability.

IV. Gender Awareness and Information Networking System (GAINS) project

A. Revitalization of INSTRAW through the establishment of GAINS

21. The Gender Awareness and Information Networking System was conceptualized as an integrated knowledge and information management system to be financed as a project, separately from the Institute's core funding. In December 1999, the General Assembly approved the establishment of GAINS and requested the Secretary-General to continue to support INSTRAW, particularly in establishing the new structure and working methods and by encouraging voluntary contributions to INSTRAW and its special projects.

22. The INSTRAW Board of Trustees, at its twentieth session in April 2000, approved a feasibility study. The Board recommended that all other programmes and activities be deferred and that GAINS be given priority.

23. Expenditures for GAINS from January 2000 to June 2001, including obligations, totalled $309,030 against an allotted budget of $515,000 for the biennium. Of this expenditure, $259,030 was spent on consultants and individual contractors, $40,000 on data-processing equipment and supplies and $10,000 on communications.

B. Implementation of GAINS

24. The GAINS project was to be completed in three phases from May 2000 through October 2001. Phases I and II involved the preparation of a web-based prototype of the project, its demonstration at the Beijing+5 Summit, its translation into Spanish and the development of networks and a database. All of the above tasks were completed or were ongoing at the time of the audit, except for the design and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation methodology, which was not completed by the scheduled date of March 2001 and has still not been implemented.

25. Some phase III components, such as pilot-testing initial research methodologies, were ongoing at the time of the audit through the activity on "Men's roles in ending gender-based violence", jointly financed by INSTRAW and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). While the estimated budget for the activity was $20,000, INSTRAW had already spent $44,826 in salaries for its research coordinator, who was primarily engaged in this activity. Six other researchers and two consultants had also been hired at a total cost of $12,400 and were charged to UNDP. The activity's achievements in terms of statistics are shown under "Eliminating men's violence net" statistics in annex II.

26. While the activity "Men's roles in ending gender-based violence" aided in using information communication technologies to conduct future projects, it was also proving to be expensive. With only two other activities in the pipeline, also to be jointly financed with UNDP, this situation posed a serious threat to achieving the INSTRAW mandate and the potential of GAINS, which was intended to enhance the Institute's research and training products. Several individual consultants had been hired to carry out phase III, on the grounds that the expansion of GAINS and its consolidation would require more staff than were available in core positions.

27. It is evident from the GAINS statistics (see annex II) and the status of its activities to date that GAINS was progressing, though not rapidly enough in some areas. For example, although there was progress in expanding the GAINS network membership, there seemed to be limited growth in the substantive areas of database expansion and actual research and training products. Although all of these activities are relevant, they are not primary to the Institute's mandate, which is to use information communication technologies-based networking methodology to nourish research and training for the advancement of women and not only for exchanging information about these technologies and their uses. Therefore, the direction GAINS is taking needs to be evaluated to determine whether it conforms to the primary mandate of INSTRAW or whether there has been a fundamental deviation from its objectives.

28. In response to the concerns raised by OIOS, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs sent a two-member team to INSTRAW in September 2001. The team confirmed the findings and conclusions of OIOS.

V. Managerial issues

A. Planning INSTRAW activities

29. As mentioned in the introduction, INSTRAW was originally conceived in 1975 at the World Conference on Women in Mexico. Since then, there have been four additional conferences and the number of issues defined at these conferences has grown substantially, particularly since 1995 (see annex III). However, with the existing resource base and its related uncertainties, INSTRAW could not create a niche for itself and its products in the international agenda for women.

30. The strategic areas planned and programmed by INSTRAW (see annex IV) represent activities adopted from the United Nations and world agenda. They are generic and scattered through the entire canvas of women's issues and lack a dedicated niche in the area of research and training. For example, although the Beijing+5 conference identified HIV/AIDS as a crucial area, it was not addressed by INSTRAW. There appeared to be no systematic efforts to customize the Institute's plan of activities to the inflow of funds for development activities. Considering that INSTRAW funding is supposed to be wholly dependent on voluntary support, specific donor interest and intergovernmental mandates should have been the primary criteria in developing the Institute's plan, but OIOS found no evidence that this occurred.

31. Certain important donors and stakeholders interviewed by OIOS in New York expressed concern about the lack of a specific research and training niche for INSTRAW. They indicated that INSTRAW did not seem to market its products well and that the Institute needed to approach private and other organizations to gain relevant expertise. The donors and stakeholders also expressed general interest in the work of INSTRAW and expressed hope that its output would be put to some tangible use and the belief that other donors should contribute, providing impetus for a more cohesive effort by INSTRAW. However, they did not suggest specific roles for INSTRAW and stated that the Institute would have to address this matter. They also noted that, because donations are linked to national government policies, it is vital for INSTRAW to be aware of these policies and any major changes to them.

32. In April 2001, a study conducted by a private consultant at a cost of $30,000 suggested specific measures for improving the Institute's fund-raising activities. However, OIOS found that INSTRAW was unable to act on these suggestions successfully. *In this regard the Department of Economic and Social Affairs stated that the issue of fund-raising in the draft OIOS report is critical to the survival of INSTRAW. Contrary to the perception of the auditors that INSTRAW should have approached private and other organizations, the former Director of INSTRAW, with the assistance of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, has repeatedly approached private and other organizations in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere, but regrettably without success, as the Institute has very few marketable products.* OIOS was aware of the Institute's efforts to approach these organizations, but was reporting on perceptions of some important donors and stakeholders as shown in paragraph 31 above.

33. *The Department of Economic and Social Affairs also shared OIOS observations on the inadequate planning of INSTRAW activities and on the need to focus on intergovernmental mandates. Currently this focus is absent from INSTRAW work plans. For example, from among the major themes contained in the work programme of the Commission on the Status of Women, while a primary forum for member States is on gender-related work, INSTRAW selected the themes dealing with the roles of men in ending gender-based violence and of men and boys in achieving gender equality for 2001. These themes will not be reviewed by the Commission until 2004. By that time, the findings of the INSTRAW seminar on men's roles in ending gender-based violence are likely to become outdated.*

B. Lack of a Director of INSTRAW

34. The position of the Director of INSTRAW was vacant from February to August 1999 and from August 2001 to March 2002. During these periods, one of the Professional staff at the P-3 or P-2 levels was designated as the Officer-in-Charge. Also, various informal administrative arrangements made by the last Director resulted in a number of problems affecting the day-to-day operation of the office and needed to be resolved urgently. These problems related to the hiring and payment of consultants. OIOS had recommended that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General no longer approve new contracts and purchases and review the present arrangements for evaluating consultants already on board. *The team from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs mentioned in paragraph 28 above generally agreed with the OIOS findings. Following the evaluation by the team, all consultancy contracts were reviewed and terminated as recommended by OIOS with the exception of one.*

C. Inappropriate use of consultants and related staffing issues

35. Many of the 18 consultants hired by INSTRAW had been assigned to supervisory and fund-raising responsibilities with no time limits, no measurable output and no delivery dates. Performance indicators were not documented in their contracts and terms of reference were not output-oriented. Furthermore, there was no consultant's roster and some posts had been advertised on the web with selections being made from among a very small number of applicants. Consultant salaries were relatively high compared to regular staff salaries and had been determined arbitrarily, without considering specific criteria such as qualifications and years and nature of experience, which are used in selecting regular staff.

36. Some consultants were supervising other consultants and, based on an informal understanding with the Director, were also supervising the core and regular staff. In fact, the consultants had requested the core staff to revise their job descriptions over and above those already approved by the Office of Human

Resources Management. For example, OIOS noted that the GAINS manager was drafting the new job description for the gender analyst post as one that would in effect assist the consultant. Furthermore, the description of the consultant's own work seemed to be a post description, as it included duties rather than terms of reference with specified output against which the consultants would be evaluated. In short, this consultant appeared to be working as project staff without having been classified as such.

37. There was friction between core staff and consultants with regard to their responsibilities. For example, although the core staff had been instrumental in implementing phases I and II of GAINS and, given their institutional memory, were conversant with the commitments made to the Economic and Social Council and General Assembly, their involvement with GAINS was terminated. The core staff were asked to report to the consultants, which worsened the personnel situation at INSTRAW. Poor personnel management and the failure to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the core staff and consultants seriously affected staff productivity and morale.

38. *The Department of Economic and Social Affairs agreed with the OIOS observations regarding these management issues and noted that the findings of the evaluation team from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs were very similar to those of the OIOS auditors. These irregularities were, however, not brought to the attention of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs or the Board by INSTRAW.*

VI. Role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for INSTRAW

39. The Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, was appointed as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for INSTRAW in September 1999. However, the letter of appointment did not spell out the detailed roles and responsibilities the Special Representative was expected to fulfil regarding the Institute. In the absence of a well functioning and effective Board and the lack of a Director, it is all the more important for an administrative focal point within the United Nations Secretariat specifically to oversee the resolution of the acute problems experienced by INSTRAW over the last decade. In the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Special Representative, who is also a senior official in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, is the appropriate United Nations official within the Secretariat to oversee INSTRAW.

40. *The Department of Economic and Social Affairs commented that, with regard to the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the autonomous nature of the Institute's mandate reflected in its statute and founding documents precludes any department or individual from providing detailed programme guidance or managing the Institute on a daily basis. In his capacity as the Chief Administrative Officer of the United Nations and having been requested to report to the General Assembly on the work of the Institute, the Secretary-General designated a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for INSTRAW at the level of Under-Secretary-General or Assistant Secretary-General. This is also the case with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and some other research and training institutions. In this capacity, the Special Representative, or his/her representative, normally attends the meetings of the Board of Trustees and arranges panels to recommend a Director for appointment by the Secretary-General, following the selection of a shortlist by the Board of Trustees. The Special Representative also assists, where necessary, the Director in expediting actions by the Office of Programme Planning Budget and Accounts or the Office of Human Resources Management. As a result of the steady downturn of INSTRAW, the Special Representative was increasingly involved in the selection of the Director, fund-raising and representational activities on behalf of the Institute.*

41. Given such a situation, OIOS believes there is a need to clarify the administrative and oversight responsibilities of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for INSTRAW.

VII. Liquidation as an alternative

42. The OIOS audit identified a number of significant issues affecting INSTRAW. Chief among these are: its inability to find a "niche" of its own in the area of research and training for women; insufficient donor contributions and the subsequent risk of increasing reliance on support from the Organization's regular budget; and problems in governance and oversight and the fact that the Gender Awareness and Information

Networking System project, the Institute's single major project, has not yielded expected results. In light of these issues, OIOS questions whether the Institute is still capable of being productive and self-sustaining in the long term. OIOS believes that the Secretary-General should therefore instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it study the option of closing INSTRAW.

VIII. Recommendations

43. OIOS makes a total of 13 recommendations concerning the sustainability of INSTRAW and its effectiveness in the advancement of women.

Recommendation 1

OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General detail the role and responsibilities of his Special Representative for INSTRAW with a clearly defined delegation of authority (AN2001/67/1/01).*

Recommendation 2

OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it consider the option of closing INSTRAW, taking into account the findings of the current OIOS report (AN2001/67/1/02).

In the event that the Working Group decides not to consider this option, OIOS makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 3

OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it examine (a) the feasibility of the Institute's continuation as an autonomous body within the framework of the United Nations and (b) the strategy for achieving effective autonomy for INSTRAW through the appropriate delegation of authority (AN2001/67/1/03).

Recommendation 4

OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General instruct his Special Representative for INSTRAW to propose to the Working Group that it consider improvements to the Institute's Board of Trustees, such as possible reconstitution of the Board to include donor representation or, alternatively, replacing the Board by a consultative committee, thereby ensuring that the Institute's primary oversight and fund-raising functions are effectively carried out (AN2001/67/1/04).

Recommendation 5

OIOS recommends that the Secretary-General propose to the General Assembly that it consider the need to continue the temporary funding of the core operations of INSTRAW from the United Nations regular budget until the Working Group has completed its in-depth assessment of the Institute and made its final recommendations concerning its sustainability, should the Working Group study not be completed before the end of the General Assembly's fifty-sixth session (AN2001/67/1/05).

Recommendation 6

OIOS recommends that the interim Director of INSTRAW evaluate its Gender Awareness Information Networking System and refocus the project before proceeding with further implementation (AN2001/67/1/06).

Recommendation 7

OIOS recommends that the interim Director of INSTRAW draw lessons learned from the single GAINS project, "Men's role as partners in ending violence towards women", and apply those lessons to the conception and development of future, more cost-effective projects (AN2001/67/1/07).

Recommendations 8-9

OIOS recommends that, in order to increase donor funding, the interim Director of INSTRAW, should:

* The number in parentheses refers to an internal code used by OIOS for recording recommendations.

(i) Consider specific donor interests and intergovernmental mandates as primary criteria in developing a more focused plan of action (AN2001/67/1/08);

(ii) Formulate a business plan geared to specific donor interests and establish a direct relationship with each of its donors in order to regenerate its financial base (AN2001/67/1/09).

Recommendations 10-13

The interim Director, INSTRAW, should ensure that:

(i) Core staff members supervise consultants (AN2001/67/1/10);

(ii) Each consultant is hired in accordance with United Nations rules for specific assignments with clear terms of reference and measurable output (AN2001/67/1/11);

(iii) Consultant emoluments are determined on the basis of set criteria commensurate with the engagement (AN2001/67/1/12);

(iv) The number of consultants is reduced to the minimum number required to maintain the web site and the project (AN2001/67/1/13).

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General
for Internal Oversight Services

Annex I

Contributions to INSTRAW, 1990-2001

(In United States dollars)

Year	*Contributions received*	*Expenditures*
1990	2 313 742	1 637 088
1991	1 328 912	2 210 511
1992	1 924 082	1 761 290
1993	1 574 686	2 676 442
1994	1 500 481	1 762 071
1995	1 318 975	1 784 474
1996	1 114 031	1 775 922
1997	720 073	1 279 318
1998	810 234	1 398 027
1999	545 687	1 037 556
2000	523 981	1 091 377
2001	316 216	755 155
Decline in contributions 1990-2001	86%	

Core staffing of INSTRAW, 1997-2001

Staff	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
Professional and above	7	5	3	3	3
General Service	24	22	15	5	5
Total	**31**	**27**	**18**	**8**	**8**

Annex II

GAINS project statistics

1. GAINS network members		
December 2000	March 2001	August 2001
48 focal points and regional nodes	99 focal points	125 focal points
13 research, training orgs./individuals	27 regional nodes	45 regional nodes
61 members	93 research organizations and individual researchers	90 research organizations and individual researchers
	31 trainers and training organizations	90 training organizations and individual trainers
	16 information communication technology specialists	89 information communication technology specialists and organizations
2. Number of database items		
June 2000	December 2000	August 2001
Few items for presentation purposes	100 entries	900 entries
		281 organizations (Jan.-June 2001)
		322 web sites
		20 mailing lists
3. Eliminating men's violence net (Men's roles in ending gender-based violence)		
May-August 2001		
550 subscribers		
114 posted messages by subscribers		
180 total messages posted		
4 papers from external contributors		
2 seminar summaries by INSTRAW		
4. GAINS Newsletter	Periodicity — monthly	10 August 2001 — for all network members
5. GAINS Net		
June 2001	Mailing lists for all subscribers	119 postings by 46 subscribers
August 2001	Connects all network members for exchange of information	

Source: INSTRAW.

Annex III

Issues defined at key world forums for the advancement of women, 1975-2000

Mexico City — 1975	*Copenhagen — 1980*	*Nairobi — 1985*	*Beijing — 1995*	*Beijing+5 — 2000*
Women and peace	Establishment of national women's machineries and action plans	Women and drought	Women and poverty	Women and poverty
Political participation	Political participation	Urban poor women	Political participation and decision-making	Women and political decision-making
Education, capacity-building	Education, training and capacity-building	Elderly women and adolescents	Education and capacity-building	Education and training
Employment and economic participation	Employment; unemployed women	Women heads of households	Women and economy	Women and economy
Health and nutrition	Health and nutrition	Women victims of violence	Health	Health (specific accent on HIV/AIDS)
Population, family and housing	Women heads of household; migrant women; adolescent women	Trafficking of women for prostitution	Violence against women	Violence against women
Research on women's issues; data compilation and analysis	Access to information; research on women's issues; data collection and analysis, gender indicators	Migrant women; refugee women, minority and indigenous women	Women and armed conflict	Women and armed conflict
	Rural women		The girl child	The girl child
	Child care		Women and the media	Women and the media
			Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women	Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women
			Human rights of women	Human rights of women

Mexico City — 1975	*Copenhagen — 1980*	*Nairobi — 1985*	*Beijing — 1995*	*Beijing + 5 — 2000*
			Women and the environment	**Women and the environment**
				Globalization (specific accent)
				Macroeconomic policies and external debt (specific accent)
				Population movements (trafficking, refugees, asylum, migrants) (specific accent)
				Role of men
				Disasters and emergency situations
				Life cycle (girl child, adolescents, older women)

Source: **INSTRAW.**

Annex IV

Comparative overview of INSTRAW strategic areas and research and training programmes, 1998-2003

Work programme 1998-1999	*Operational budget 2000*	*Strategic plan and programme 2000-2003*	*Strategic focus and work plan 2001*
1. Research programme: Engendering socio-economic and socio-political development	1. Research programme: Engendering socio-economic and socio-political development	1. Research programme: Engendering socio-economic and socio-political development	1. Research and training programme: The gendered impact of globalization on development and peace
1.1. Research subprogramme: Engendering socio-economic development	1.1. Research subprogramme: Engendering socio-economic development	1.1. Research subprogramme: Engendering socio-economic development	1.1. Research and training subprogramme: Gender dimensions of economic globalization
Research and training projects: (i) Temporary labour migration of women in SE Asia; (ii) Trafficking in women	Research and training projects: 1.1.1. Temporary labour migration of women in SE Asia (book); 1.1.2. Labour migration and trafficking of women from transition countries to WE; 1.1.3. E-mail order brides from transition countries to Western Europe; 1.1.4. Entry into information societies-gender perspective on empowerment	Research and training projects: 1.1.1. Gender dimensions of transition in Central Asia; 1.1.2. Implications of globalization of women in the Arab world; 1.1.3. Gender impact of the Asian crisis; 1.1.4. Women, social security and household survival strategies	Research and training projects: 1.1.1. Gender audit of the poverty reduction strategy papers; 1.1.2. Capacity-building on gender, macroeconomics and trade
1.2. Research subprogramme: Engendering socio-political development	1.2. Research subprogramme: Engendering socio-political development	1.2. Research subprogramme: Engendering socio-political development	1.2. Research and training subprogramme: Migration patterns in a globalizing world
Research and training projects: (i) Engendering the political agenda; (ii) The role of the State, women's organizations and the international community; (iii) Women networking for conflict prevention; (iv) Database on water resources; (v) Database on gender training materials; (vi) Unpaid work of women and men in the Dominican Republic	Research and training projects: 1.2.1. Engendering the political agenda (book); 1.2.2. Women networking for conflict prevention; 1.2.3. Engendering conflict prevention indicators; 1.2.4. Engendering peacekeeping operations	Research and training projects: 1.2.1. Engendering the political agenda at local level; 1.2.2. Engendering the United Nations agenda; 1.2.3. Women, conflict prevention and resolution; 1.2.4. Women, human rights and identity politics	Research and training projects: 1.2.1. Labour migration of women from transition countries to Western and Southern Europe; 1.2.2. E-mail order brides: human rights dimensions
2. Training subprogramme: Statistics and indicators on gender issues	Implementation of GAINS		1.3. Research and training subprogramme: Gender, governance and conflict prevention and resolution

Work programme 1998-1999	*Operational budget 2000*	*Strategic plan and programme 2000-2003*	*Strategic focus and work plan 2001*
Training and research projects: 1. Training seminar in Mongolia; 2. Evaluation of training guidelines for time-use and valuation methodology	Training: Development of new e-training strategy through GAINS linked to its research projects	Training: Guidelines on training on each of its research topics (as part of the research outputs) and expansion of electronic database on gender training materials	Research and training projects: 1.3.1. Conflict and gender: mapping and exploring women's involvement in conflict and conflict resolution
3. Training subprogramme: Women and the use of computer mediated technology			1.4. Research and training subprogramme: Women and men in the information society
Research and training projects: 3.1. On-line manual for enhancing the use of computer mediated communications base on needs assessment survey			Research and training projects: 1.4.1. Women's entry into the information society; 1.4.2. Strengthening ICT capacity for knowledge generation and management of INSTRAW focal points in Africa; 1.4.3. Pilot testing workshop for strengthening ICT capacity in the Caribbean region
4. Training subprogramme: Women and environmental management and sustainable development			2. Research and training programme: Building partnerships among men and women for gender equality
Training projects: a. Training in Solomon Islands; b. Training in Poland			2.1. Research and training subprogramme: Men's roles and responsibilities in ending gender-based violence
			Research and training projects: 2.1.1. Virtual conference on working with men to end gender-based violence; 2.1.2. Training module on men and gender equality
			2.2. Research and training subprogramme: Theorizing gender-based violence
			Research and training projects: 2.2.1. Theorizing gender-based violence
Inter-agency activities	Inter-agency activities	Inter-agency activities	Inter-agency activities
Network collaboration partnerships:	Network collaboration partnerships:	Network collaboration partnerships:	Network collaboration partnerships:

Work programme 1998-1999	*Operational budget 2000*	*Strategic plan and programme 2000-2003*	*Strategic focus and work plan 2001*
Networking with focal points, academic and research institutes, organizations, research fellows	Networking with focal points, academic and research institutes, organizations, research fellows through GAINS	Networking with focal points, academic and research institutes, organizations, research fellows through GAINS	Networking with focal points, academic and research institutes, organizations, research fellows through GAINS

Source: INSTRAW.